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Agenda item 74 (a)
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 4 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith the report of the fourteenth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Bujumbura on 17 and 18 August 2000 (see annex).

The meeting made important recommendations and drew up a programme of work for the Committee for 2000-2001 which will require the support of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have the report circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 74 (a), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Marc **Nteturuye**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 4 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Report of the fourteenth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (Bujumbura, 17 and 18 August 2000)

Introduction

The fourteenth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held in Bujumbura on 17 and 18 August 2000.

The following States members took part in the meeting: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Republic of the Congo. Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe did not attend.

Representatives of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity also participated in the work.

The opening ceremony featured:

A message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, read out by Mr. Jean Arnault, his Special Representative in Burundi;

A statement by the Representative of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Sylvain Ngung Etul Mpwotsh;

The opening address by H.E. Mr. Frederic Bamvuginyumvira, First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi.

Adoption of the agenda

The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Report of the outgoing Bureau
3. Evaluation of the implementation of previous decisions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee
   (a) Establishment of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX);
   (b) Organization of joint military exercises in connection with peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of Central Africa;
   (c) Establishment of a subregional parliament in Central Africa;
   (d) Establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy.
4. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa
5. Intergovernmental cooperation in security matters in Central Africa
6. Implementation of the recommendations of the Subregional Conference on the Proliferation of and Illicit Traffic in Small Arms in Central Africa
7. Report of the Subregional Conference on the Question of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Central Africa
8. Draft resolution on the activities of the Standing Advisory Committee
9. Date and place of the next meeting
10. Work programme of the Committee for 2000-2001
11. Other matters
12. Adoption of the report of the fourteenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee

Conduct of work

I. Election of officers

The Committee elected a new Bureau, as follows:

President:
Burundi

First Vice-President:
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Second Vice-President:
Central African Republic

Rapporteur:
Equatorial Guinea

II. Report of the outgoing Bureau

The Committee took note of the report presented by H.E. Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad, in his capacity as outgoing Chairman of the Bureau at the ministerial level.

The Committee welcomed the efforts made by the outgoing Bureau to discharge the mandates entrusted to it by the twelfth and thirteenth ministerial meetings, particularly the assistance provided by the Committee to ECCAS in organizing a meeting of experts in Malabo in order to draw up a draft protocol on the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX); the organization in Bujumbura of the Subregional Conference on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Central Africa; the awareness-raising among the countries of the subregion with regard to the need for signing and/or ratifying the Non-Aggression Pact; the organization of the thirteenth and fourteenth ministerial meetings, the steps taken for the effective launching of COPAX; and the establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy.

III. Evaluation of the implementation of the previous decisions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee

(a) Establishment of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX)

The Committee welcomed the information provided by the Gabonese delegation on progress in the setting up of an early warning mechanism, and in particular on the refurbishing of the building made available to the mechanism by the Gabonese Government.

The Committee was also informed of the contacts currently under way between ECCAS and the Gabonese Government with a view to the early opening of the building that will house the headquarters of the early warning mechanism.

The Committee welcomed the progress achieved in the elaboration of terms of reference for the early warning mechanism, the Central African Multinational Force and the Defence Commission for the Central African Countries and encouraged the member countries to make every effort to ensure their prompt adoption.

The Committee welcomed the ratification by several member countries of the legal instruments governing COPAX and the Mutual Assistance Pact and called on countries that have not yet done so to take the necessary steps to ratify these instruments.

(b) Organization of military exercises in connection with peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of Central Africa

The Committee reiterated its interest in organizing joint military exercises.

It repeated its recommendation that a meeting of the chiefs of staff of the Central African countries should be convened in order to review the Biyongho-98 exercise, revise its costs downwards and determine the division of contributions among the different countries.

The Committee noted with satisfaction that Gabon, the country which is to accommodate the exercise, was prepared to host this meeting.

A mandate was given to the Bureau to take all the necessary steps for the organization of the meeting.

(c) Establishment of a subregional parliament in Central Africa

The Committee was informed of the continuing contacts between ECCAS and the Government of Equatorial Guinea on the subject of the project to establish a subregional parliament in Central Africa.

It welcomed the establishment of a network of parliamentarians from the Central African countries in Malabo on 24 June 2000.

A mandate was given to the Bureau to continue to follow developments and to report on them at the next meeting.

(d) Establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy

The Committee congratulated the Cameroon Government on the steps that it had taken to start up the activities of the centre and noted with satisfaction the positive developments on this project, including:

- The wish expressed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that the centre should commence its activities in September 2000;
- The visit to Cameroon by two delegations from the Office to finalize the project with the local authorities and to that end to prepare a draft headquarters agreement and a memorandum of understanding between the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the State of Cameroon and the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Cameroon;
- The information that the Secretary-General of the United Nations intended shortly to appoint a regional adviser to make arrangements for the operation of the centre;
- The offer by the Cameroon authorities of temporary premises at the Cameroon Institute of International Relations (IRIC).

In the interests of speeding up arrangements for the full operation of the centre, the Committee recommended that a meeting of experts from member countries should be organized in Yaoundé, with the task of finalizing the documents governing the organization and functioning of the centre.

A mandate has been given to the Bureau to take all the necessary steps to organize the meeting, in cooperation with the secretariat.

IV. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa

Burundi

The Committee welcomed the positive developments in the situation in Burundi and in particular the progress achieved in the Arusha peace talks, including the preparation by the mediator of a draft agreement on peace and reconciliation which gives grounds for real hope.

It expressed its support for the efforts of the Government of Burundi and all Burundians engaged in the search for a lasting peace for the country.

The Committee commended the mediator's efforts to date to bring peace to Burundi and encouraged him to work on the establishment of a framework for a speedy outcome to the peace talks.

It urgently appealed to the armed rebels to agree to take part in the current talks and called on all the Burundian parties to work for national reconciliation and renewed peace in Burundi.

The Committee called for the immediate proclamation of a ceasefire in order to put an end to the heavy loss of human life.

It urged the countries of the region, particularly those of the Great Lakes region, to help the people of Burundi to regain peace through dialogue and reconciliation and not to engage in violence and war.

The Committee appealed to the international community for substantial support for the peace efforts in Burundi by such measures as renewing their cooperation with the country.

Cameroon

The Committee welcomed the growing climate of peace and stability in Cameroon.

It expressed concern at the ongoing cross-border phenomenon of roadblocks, the illicit traffic in light weapons, small arms and weapons of war and the upsurge in organized crime.

It welcomed the determination of the Government of Cameroon to combat insecurity, the commendable efforts it had made in that regard and the notable success already achieved.

The Committee noted with satisfaction the creation in the country of operational structures to combat corruption and insecurity.

It welcomed the continuation of the policy of dialogue pursued by the Government of Cameroon by implementing a consensual democracy which would favour the country's harmonious development.

The Committee again expressed deep concern at the information provided by the delegation of Cameroon on the persistent attempts at infiltration and repeated acts of provocation by Nigerian forces on the Bakassi peninsula and called on the two parties to refrain from any action that could heighten tensions while awaiting the decision of the International Court of Justice, which Cameroon had seized of the matter.

The Committee, while reiterating its appeal to the international community and friendly countries to assist in maintaining the peace between Cameroon and Nigeria while awaiting the verdict of the International Court of Justice, requested the Court to take the necessary steps to ensure a rapid conclusion of the proceeding pending before it.

The Committee again urged Nigeria to comply strictly with the interim measures of protection laid down by the Court in its ruling of 15 March 1996 and called upon the two parties to refrain from taking any action that could create difficulties for the application of the final judgement of the Court.

Republic of the Congo

The Committee welcomed the effective cessation of hostilities throughout the territory of the Republic of the Congo.

It welcomed the results obtained by the Monitoring Committee in the implementation of the various clauses of the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities agreements, including those relating to:

- The resettlement of persons displaced both within and outside the country;
- The collection of weapons and ammunition of war; and
- The integration and rehabilitation of former members of the militia.

The Committee noted with satisfaction the easing of tension in the social and political climate in the Congo, the return to normal traffic conditions and other activities throughout the territory, the normalization of life in both city and country, the reopening of the Congo-Ocean railway and the adoption of the temporary post-conflict programme.

It encouraged the Congolese authorities and the mediator to organize a national dialogue, without exclusions, which would act as a culmination of the efforts undertaken to date and would encourage the renewal of the democratization process.

The Committee appealed to the international community to give its backing to the consolidation of peace in the Congo by increasing its support for the collection of weapons, the integration of demobilized young members of the militia and the implementation of the temporary post-conflict programme.

Gabon

The Committee was pleased at the climate of peace and political stability in Gabon, characterized by the free exercise of activities by political parties.

The Committee welcomed the measures taken by Gabon to strengthen national legislation for the protection of refugees with the establishment of:

- A National Refugee Commission;
- An Eligibility Subcommission; and
- An Appeals Office.

It was pleased at the strengthening of the cooperation between Gabon and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) by means of the signature of a letter of understanding authorizing a non-governmental organization to support the Office's activities in its current campaign in south-east Gabon.

Equatorial Guinea

The Committee welcomed the climate of peace and stability prevailing in Equatorial Guinea.

It noted with satisfaction the progress in the democratization process in Equatorial Guinea and the recent transparent municipal elections, characterized by

the participation of all the political parties and a high turnout.

The Committee commended the Government for its efforts to promote a culture of democracy in the country and welcomed the financial assistance granted to political parties for the elections.

It welcomed the policy of friendly cooperation pursued by Equatorial Guinea with its neighbours.

Central African Republic

The Committee welcomed the restoration of peace in the Central African Republic and the efforts made by the Government to consolidate the peace with the assistance of the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA).

It welcomed the establishment of participatory democracy in the Central African Republic, characterized by the presence in the Government of representatives of various political groups.

The Committee expressed its concern at the continuing acts of banditry carried out in the hinterland by means of roadblocks and noted with satisfaction the efforts made by the Central African Government to combat insecurity.

Chad

The Committee welcomed the continuing process of consolidation of peace and democracy in Chad, particularly the steps taken to prepare for the forthcoming elections through the promulgation of the act establishing the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI).

It encouraged the Chadian authorities to continue the policy of dialogue and reaching out to the opposition in order to arrive at national reconciliation among all Chadians.

It appealed to all parties in Chad to respond positively to this desire for dialogue and to give priority to conciliation in order to preserve the higher interests of the Chadian people.

The Committee took note with satisfaction of the positive outcome of the approaches made concerning the Chadian pipeline project and the approval of this project by the international financial institutions.

It also welcomed the opening of a UNHCR local office in N'Djamena.

V. Intergovernmental cooperation in security matters in Central Africa

The Committee took note with satisfaction of the actions and initiatives taken by the States members within the framework of cooperation in security matters, aimed at lessening tensions, combating insecurity in the border areas and making it possible to have exchanges between the various national structures dealing with these questions.

In view of the cross-border nature of most of the security problems in the subregion and the need to respond to them in a joint and concerted manner, the Committee again strongly recommended greater cooperation and dialogue among the security forces of the Central African countries, particularly within the framework of periodic meetings and the organization of joint operations.

The Committee particularly welcomed:

- The participation of Gabonese officers in the activities of the Monitoring Committee for the return of peace to the Congo;
- The tripartite security cooperation among the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola;
- Cooperation between the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic with regard to refugee flows and the safety of navigation on the Congo and Ubangi rivers.

The Committee expressed its concern at the administrative harassment to which nationals of the subregion are subjected in some member States. It recommended the intensification of high-level meetings between authorities of the member States, as well as regular meetings between border authorities, in order to prevent possible tensions arising from this situation and to consider ways and means of putting an end to them.

The Committee expressed its deep concern with regard to the upsurge in organized crime and insecurity in the countries of the subregion, particularly the development of the phenomenon of roadblocks. It

recommended the intensification of information exchange and the organization of large-scale joint operations to combat this scourge. It recommended that a high-level meeting should be held on the question, aimed at setting up a suitable legal framework for cooperation in the matter.

It stressed the need for closer cooperation among the security services of various countries with a view to combating the cross-border trade in stolen vehicles and, in this context, welcomed the creation in Chad of a unit to combat vehicle theft.

The Committee also recommended the creation of a fund to combat crime. The Bureau was mandated to study and propose ways and means of allocating sufficient resources to the fund.

Recalling the importance to the subregion's peace and security of the Mutual Assistance Pact concluded at Malabo in February 2000 among the countries of Central Africa, the Committee recommended that the Bureau should draw the attention of those countries which had not already done so to the need to sign and/or ratify the Pact by the end of 2000.

Aware of the need to strengthen cooperation for peace and security in the subregion, the Committee appealed to those countries that had not yet ratified the agreement on criminal police cooperation, signed in April 1999 at the meeting of the Committee of Central African Police Chiefs in Yaoundé (CCPAC), to take all necessary steps to proceed to the rapid ratification of this text and guarantee its full effectiveness.

The Committee also welcomed with satisfaction the decisions adopted at the third meeting of CCPAC, held in Yaoundé from 12 to 19 June 2000, particularly:

- The setting up in each country of a committee to monitor the activities of CCPAC;
- The creation of a framework for dialogue and cooperation among Central African directors of the *police judiciaire*;
- The holding in November 2000 of national consultations among crime control agencies;
- The harmonization of legislation in the countries of the subregion with a view to combating organized crime.

VI. Implementation of the recommendations of the Subregional Conference on the Proliferation of and Illicit Traffic in Small Arms in Central Africa

After reviewing the recommendations formulated by the Subregional Conference on the Proliferation of and Illicit Traffic in Small Arms in Central Africa, held in N'Djamena from 25 to 27 October 1999, the Committee welcomed the efforts of the countries of the subregion to implement them.

The Committee recommended that member countries should intensify measures to implement the recommendations of the Conference and, more generally, should spare no effort in the campaign against the proliferation of and illicit traffic in small arms, taking into account the dangers of this scourge for peace, security, stability and development in the subregion.

It welcomed the initiative taken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the Government of Canada for the development of a subregional programme to combat the proliferation of and illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, initially covering three member countries: Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad.

It recommended that member countries should participate in the ministerial meeting to be held in Bamako in October 2000, in order to arrive at an African position in advance of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to be convened in 2001.

VII. Report of the Subregional Conference on the Question of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Central Africa

The Committee took note of the report and recommendations of the Subregional Conference on the Question of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Central Africa, held in Bujumbura from 14 to 16 August 2000, and commended the participants on the pertinence and quality of the results of their deliberations.

The Committee entrusted the Chairman of the Bureau with transmitting the conclusions of this Conference to member States and to the secretaries-general of ECCAS, OAU and the United Nations, with a view to gaining support for their implementation.

VIII. Draft resolution on the activities of the Standing Advisory Committee

The Committee considered and adopted the draft resolution on its activities to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

It recommended that all member countries should contact their permanent missions to the United Nations in New York so as to ensure their consistent support for the adoption of this draft resolution.

IX. Date and place of the next meeting

The Committee decided to hold its fifteenth ministerial meeting during the second half of March 2001 in Bujumbura.

X. Work programme of the Committee for 2000-2001

- High-level seminar on the organization and functioning of an early warning mechanism (Yaoundé, January 2001);
- Fifteenth ministerial meeting of the Committee (Bujumbura, second half of March 2001);
- Meeting of experts on the modalities and terms of reference for the subregional centre for human rights and democracy (Yaoundé, date to be determined);
- Meeting of the chiefs of staff in order to review the Biyongho-98 military exercise (Libreville, date to be determined);
- Organization of a subregional conference on the protection of women and children in armed conflicts (place and date to be determined);
- Sixteenth ministerial meeting of the Committee (place and date to be determined).

XI. Other matters

The Committee urged member States to make regular contributions to the trust fund intended to finance its activities.

Lastly, the participants welcomed the favourable climate that had prevailed throughout their deliberations and expressed their appreciation to the President of the Republic of Burundi, H.E. Mr. Pierre Buyoya, and to the Burundian Government and people for the warm welcome and fraternal attentions paid to them during their stay in Burundi.

Bujumbura, 18 August 2000

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Agenda item 109
Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 4 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith the report of the Subregional Conference on the Question of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Central Africa, held in Bujumbura, Burundi, from 14 to 16 August 2000 and organized by the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (see annex).

The conclusions of this meeting will no doubt help the States concerned to understand the crucial problem of internally displaced persons, who number in the millions in this region, and find short- and long-term solutions to this problem.

This contribution and the continued attention given to the issue will help to relieve the States of the Central African subregion, already beset by war and poverty.

I should be grateful if you would have the report circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 109, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Marc **Nteturuye**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 4 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Report of the Subregional Conference on the Question of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Central Africa (Bujumbura, 14-16 August 2000)

I. Introduction

The Subregional Conference on the Question of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Central Africa was held in Bujumbura from 14 to 16 August 2000, under the auspices of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

The Conference was held in response to the concerns expressed at previous meetings of the Advisory Committee about the vast expansion in recent years of massive movements of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa and their impact on both the populations concerned and the host countries or regions.

Since its establishment in 1992 by the United Nations Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/37 B of 6 December 1991, the Committee has seen itself as a tool of preventive diplomacy in the effort to ward off conflict within and among the member States, inter alia by addressing issues that are likely to threaten the peace, stability and development of the countries of the subregion and by devising appropriate measures to deal with them.

At their twelfth meeting, held in N'Djamena from 26 to 30 October 1999, the ministers of the countries members of the Committee expressed grave concern about the security problems created in the subregion by the massive influx of refugees and armed elements coming from other countries. They advocated increased bilateral contacts in order to lessen the tension aroused by this situation and requested the Bureau to take the initiatives needed for the holding of a subregional conference on the matter during the fourteenth ministerial meeting.

The following countries took part in the Conference: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe did not attend.

The Conference, which brought together high-level government officials, senior officers of the armed forces and representatives of civil society, offered an opportunity for an in-depth, open and direct exchange of views among them on the extent, manifestations and consequences of the phenomenon of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa and on national and subregional steps to be taken to deal with it.

The participants' analysis and discussions of these sensitive issues were enriched by presentations given by experts who had been called upon by the Committee secretariat because of their competence and expertise on the issues. They included, inter alia:

Ms. Rebecca Quionie Oba-Omoali, magistrate and Director for Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, Republic of the Congo;

Mr. François-Xavier Doudou Kiadila, principal legal adviser for Central and West Africa, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva;

Ms. Fatima Banzani-Mollet, attorney, Republic of the Congo;

Mr. Abraham Constant Ndinga Mbo, professor of history, Republic of the Congo;

Mr. Roger Mengue Ekomie, legal adviser to the Minister of the Interior, Gabon.

The secretariat of the conference comprised Ms. Pamela Mapongo, Secretary of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, assisted by Ms. Nicole Moran and Mr. Ferdinand Ngoh Ngoh.

The opening ceremony was presided over by H.E. Mr. Luc Rukingama, Minister of Communication,

Republic of Burundi, on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. It featured:

- A statement by Mr. Moundoum Golngar, Director of the Africa/Asia/Western Pacific Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chad, representing the Chairman of the Bureau of the Committee, H.E. Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Republic of Chad;
- A message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, read out by Mr. Georg Charpentier, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Burundi;
- An address by Mr. Sylvain Ngung Etul Mpwotsh, Representative of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity;
- A welcoming address by H.E. Mr. Luc Rukingama, Minister of Communication of the Republic of Burundi, on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation;
- An opening statement by H.E. Mr. Pascal Nkurunziza, Minister for the Reintegration and Resettlement of Displaced and Repatriated Persons;

The participants drew inspiration from these statements for their discussions.

The participants decided to entrust guidance of the work of the Conference to the Bureau of the Committee.

The work of the Conference was therefore chaired by Mr. Moundoum Golngar of Chad.

Mr. Denis Mbainguebe, Director of the Air and Border Police of the Central African Republic, acted as Rapporteur General.

The work of the Conference covered the following themes:

Theme No. 1

Causes and consequences of massive displacements of persons in Central Africa

Presentation of the theme: Mr. Abraham Constant Ndinga Mbo, emeritus professor of history, Republic of the Congo

Theme No. 2

Situation of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa (magnitude of the phenomenon, difficulties, constraints and the problems of recognition, integration and repatriation)

Presentation of the theme: Mr. François-Xavier Doudou Kiadila, principal legal adviser for Central and West Africa, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva

Theme No. 3

Problems specific to women and children refugees and displaced persons

Presentation of the theme: Ms. Fatima Banzani-Mollet, attorney, Republic of the Congo;

Theme No. 4

Legal and institutional framework for the protection of refugees and displaced persons (national, regional and international legislation)

Presentation of the theme: Mr. Roger Mengue Ekomie, legal adviser to the Minister of the Interior, Gabon.

Theme No. 5

Solutions to the problems of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa (measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels to improve the situation of refugees and displaced persons)

Presentation of the theme: Mr. François-Xavier Doudou Kiadila, principal legal adviser for Central and West Africa, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva

Presentation of the draft plan of action: Ms. Rebecca Quionie Oba-Omoali, Director for Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, Republic of the Congo

II. Work of the Conference

In conformity with the methodology proposed by the organizers, the Bujumbura Conference gave rise to substantial statements presented by the high-level experts, followed by dynamic and constructive exchanges among representatives of Governments, international organizations and civil society, resulting in relevant recommendations on specific measures to be taken to deal with the proliferation of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa.

A. Under Theme No. 1, on the **causes and consequences of massive displacements of persons in Central Africa**, participants unanimously recognized the seriousness of the current situation of refugees and displaced persons, which in varying degrees affects all the countries of Central Africa. They stressed the growth in the numbers of refugees and displaced persons in the subregion in recent years.

The participants cited as the main cause of the proliferation of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa the deadly conflicts to which the subregion has been constantly subjected.

They noted that the civil wars or inter-State confrontations that had occurred or persisted in many countries of the region, involving opposing factions, armed groups, ethnic groups, mutineers, militia, insurgent troops, rebel movements and government troops, had driven many refugees from their homes and onto the roads in quest of a safe haven. Among the causes of these conflicts the participants cited the derailment of democratic transition, political revenge, struggles for power and control over resources, post-electoral disputes, tribalism, political manipulation of ethnic groups, refusal to alternate political power, absence of a democratic culture, poor governance, lack of democratic institutions, of sensible conduct of political affairs or of social justice, and economic inequalities.

The participants noted the following additional causes of forced and massive displacement of persons in Central Africa:

- Attacks on human rights: massive and widespread human rights violations, massacres, genocide and others;
- Oppression of religious or ethnic minorities;
- Ethnic, political or religious intolerance;
- Natural disasters: drought, floods, volcanic eruptions;
- Economic causes: economic underdevelopment, destitution and poverty;
- Xenophobia and external interference.

The participants drew attention to two types of consequences of movements of refugees and displaced persons:

- Consequences suffered by refugees and displaced persons themselves, who have often lost everything (land, homes, goods, family) and generally struggle to survive in particularly difficult conditions, suffering from hunger, illness and countless privations and being subjected to all sorts of abuse and ill-treatment (rape, theft, massacres and others);
- Consequences suffered by the host countries: attacks on the stability, security and economy of the host country, increase in organized crime, armed raids, armed robbery, rape, theft, murder, destruction of local economies, shortage of social services, creation of economic and social imbalances, damage to the environment, destruction of flora and fauna, tension and conflicts with indigenous peoples, increasing insecurity, proliferation of and illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, spread of disease, tensions or open conflicts between the host country and the country of origin, loss of control by the central authority of some parts of the national territory, political destabilization and disturbance of democratic processes.

B. Under Theme No. 2, on **the situation of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa (magnitude of the phenomenon, difficulties, constraints and the problems of recognition, integration and repatriation)**, the participants noted that the magnitude which the phenomenon of refugees and displaced persons had reached in Central Africa in recent years was a cause of great concern for the countries of the subregion.

They drew attention to the large numbers of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa and deplored the unavailability of reliable statistics that would give a better idea of the scope of the phenomenon.

In addressing the questions concerning recognition of refugee status, they deplored the gaps and imperfections in the existing legal framework.

They pointed out the difficulties encountered in the management of refugees and displaced persons, noting that the political difficulties consisted of a lack of will on the part of Governments to allocate the necessary resources; that the economic and financial difficulties resulted from the lack of adequate funding; and that the legal difficulties arose from deficiencies in the legal framework, in particular for displaced persons.

The participants also condemned the attitude of the combatants who denied humanitarian organizations access to refugees and sometimes attacked humanitarian personnel.

They recalled that granting asylum to refugees should be considered a humanitarian act and not an unfriendly act against the country of origin.

The participants also called for the establishment of more regular consultation with UNHCR and the joint elaboration of assistance measures for refugees.

C. Under Theme No. 3, on **problems specific to women and children refugees and displaced persons**, the participants examined the particular difficulties encountered by these vulnerable groups.

They noted that these categories, which represented the majority of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa (about 80 per cent) faced a situation even more tragic than other refugees because of their vulnerability.

They were victims, whatever their age, of all sorts of exploitation, abuse and inhuman and degrading treatment, including various forms of physical violence, maltreatment, torture, murder; sexual violence: rape, forced prostitution; and forced conscription into combat ranks (child soldiers initiated into drug use and used as instruments of death).

The participants especially condemned the systematic rape of refugee and displaced women and children in situations of armed conflict and the forced conscription of children, which had serious physical and psychological repercussions.

Among other difficulties which refugee women and children faced, the participants mentioned malnutrition, disease, problems with daily survival (safe water supply), discrimination in the granting of humanitarian aid, and delays in schooling.

The participants believed that many of the abuses suffered by refugee and displaced women and children could be explained by the nature of the current conflicts, which are more often clashes between militias, ethnic groups or factions led by soldiers who have not received proper training and do not observe the rules of international humanitarian law.

They deplored the fact that women's organizations and other structures of civil society were seldom involved in the design of programmes of assistance and training for refugee women and children. They also expressed their concern at the lack of subregional coordination mechanisms for women's organizations that could promote the protection of women's rights in situations of armed conflict and more active participation by women in the dynamics of the settlement of conflicts.

Stressing the need for better protection of women and children in the context of the wars and conflicts in Central Africa, the participants called for a subregional conference on the protection of women and children in armed conflict and the establishment of specific reception centres in the various countries of Central Africa to provide medical and psychological care to refugee women and children.

D. Under Theme No. 4, on **a legal and institutional framework for the protection of refugees and displaced persons (national, regional and international legislation)**, the participants examined the national, regional and international legal instruments for the protection of refugees and displaced persons.

They noted the inequity between the existence of a legal framework for the protection of refugees at the national, regional and international levels and the ill-defined situation of displaced persons, where there is no such framework.

Among the legal instruments providing protection for refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa, the following were cited: the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols, the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Additional Protocol of 1967, the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, the 1984 Convention Against

Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the African Charter of Human and People's Rights and national legislation. The 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were also mentioned.

The participants welcomed the fact that the national legislation of the countries of the subregion included laws governing the situation of refugees and guaranteeing protection of their rights. Some national legislation also included the provisions of the relevant international legal instruments.

They were also encouraged by the accession on the part of the countries of the subregion to most of the legal instruments for the protection of refugees and urged those countries which had not yet done so to accede to, sign or ratify all the relevant legal instruments for the protection of refugees and displaced persons and to ensure their effective implementation.

The participants deplored, however, the ignorance of the international legal instruments for the protection of refugees on the part of the persons responsible for their implementation, in addition to the flagrant and repeated violations in the countries of Central Africa of the various international legal instruments for the protection of human rights and the rights of refugees. These violations were generally perpetrated by combatants, but also by Governments, even though they were parties to these instruments.

The participants also welcomed the existence in all the countries of the subregion of administrative structures for the management of refugees and displaced persons and expressed satisfaction with their efforts to come to the aid of refugees. Nevertheless, they deplored the lack of material, logistical and financial resources for those structures and appealed to the international community to provide them with more substantial support.

The participants also expressed their concern at the discrimination against certain groups of displaced persons on the basis of ethnic, political and religious considerations.

In addition, they expressed their profound concern at the imbalance between the humanitarian aid provided to refugees and that allocated to displaced persons, and they stressed that the preference given to refugees by humanitarian agencies had often resulted in tensions between refugees and the local population, not to mention displaced persons. They therefore called on humanitarian organizations, and in particular UNHCR, to show greater interest in the situation of displaced persons.

E. Under Theme No. 5, on **solutions to the problems of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa (measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels to improve the situation of refugees and displaced persons)**, the participants cited a number of durable solutions to resolve the problems of refugees: repatriation, integration and resettlement.

They appealed to the countries of the subregion to create conditions conducive to the return of refugees to their countries of origin. To that end, they recommended the signing of tripartite or bilateral agreements between the host country, the country of origin and UNHCR.

After examining the draft plan of action submitted during the meeting, the participants recommended a package of measures to be taken at the national and subregional level to find lasting solutions to the problems of refugees and displaced persons in Central Africa.

The following recommendations were adopted:

III. Recommendations

National measures

- Ratify and implement effectively the major international legal instruments relating to international humanitarian law, human rights and the rights of refugees;
- Adopt measures to strengthen national institutional capacity and ensure an independent administration of justice likely to guarantee the protection of human rights, peace and democracy;
- Re-establish the traditional mechanisms for preventing, managing and settling conflicts, namely, dialogue, mediation and reconciliation;
- Involve women, young people, elderly persons and members of national minorities in preventing, managing and settling conflicts;

- Adopt appropriate legislative, judicial and administrative measures to protect refugees and displaced persons on the basis of the international legal instruments relating to international humanitarian law, human rights and the rights of refugees;
- Adhere strictly to the principle of non-refoulement, as embodied in the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951, and the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 10 September 1969;
- Formulate policies to grant asylum to refugees in accordance with the age-old tradition of African hospitality;
- Give women a more important role in the planning and implementation of programmes relating to security in Central Africa;
- Establish, in consultation with UNHCR, appropriate mechanisms for countering the presence of armed elements and other combatants in the refugee camps, including their disarmament and demobilization, in order to preserve the civilian and humanitarian character of the camps;
- Situate refugee camps at a reasonable distance from the frontier of their country of origin, pursuant to the OAU Convention of 10 September 1969;
- Develop, in collaboration with civil society, programmes to assist and protect refugees and displaced persons;
- Strengthen and apply laws against rape and other forms of violence against women;
- Conduct awareness-raising and training campaigns on the law applicable in time of war and the rights of women and children;
- Develop appropriate policies on the resettlement of refugees;
- Promote the right of refugees and displaced persons to return to their countries of origin or their areas of habitual residence by creating conditions conducive to their repatriation;
- Encourage the local integration or rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons through specific programmes;
- Carry out non-discriminatory integration or reintegration efforts on behalf of all persons affected by armed conflicts;
- Formulate reintegration and rehabilitation programmes comprising activities designed to promote democracy, national reconciliation, social justice, human rights and humanitarian law;
- Request support from the international community to enable the host State to ensure the rehabilitation or reintegration of refugees and displaced persons;
- Disseminate and implement the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement;
- Mitigate and prevent the negative effects resulting from the presence of refugees by making a better choice of camp locations;
- Request assistance from the international community for the reclamation of areas destroyed by the indirect results of the existence of refugees;
- Organize specific training for soldiers in international humanitarian law, including the specific problems of refugees and displaced persons;
- Adopt the measures required to ensure transparent cooperation between the national authorities of the host countries and UNHCR;
- Promote confidence between the national authorities of the host countries and those of the countries of origin with a view to a similar understanding of the right of asylum;
- Strengthen the strict observance of article 3 of the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 18 September 1969, whereby the asylum countries undertake to prohibit refugees residing in their territories from carrying out subversive activities likely to cause tension between them and the countries of origin;
- Establish a national committee to follow up the outcome of this Conference whose role will be, inter alia, to formulate a programme of assistance, protection and promotion of the rights of refugees and displaced persons.

Subregional and regional measures

- Develop subregional cooperation to foster the promotion and observance of democracy and the rule of law through symposia, meetings, seminars, and so on;
- Speed up the procedure for ratifying the documents establishing the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX);
- Comply with the 1954 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 United Nations Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;
- Establish within the Central African Multinational Force (FOMAC) a special unit composed mainly of women who are responsible for protecting vulnerable groups (women, children, elderly persons, and so on) in armed conflicts;
- Establish, under the auspices of subregional organizations or OAU, ad hoc tripartite commissions, composed of representatives of the country or countries of origin, the country or countries of asylum and UNHCR, with a view to more effectively managing and settling disputes relating to refugees;
- Ensure wide dissemination, in the working languages of OAU, of the international legal instruments relating to the protection of refugees, particularly the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa;
- Organize training seminar-workshops on assisting and protecting refugees and displaced persons for members of civil society working in the humanitarian field;
- Establish women's groups and associations with the support of the Advisory Committee;
- Establish throughout Central Africa a network of women working for peace and security on the model of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS);
- Organize, in collaboration with UNHCR and all other relevant humanitarian organizations, subregional training seminar-workshops for Governments and members of civil society working in the humanitarian field;
- Conduct, at the national and subregional levels, an awareness-raising campaign among refugee women concerning their fundamental rights and those of their children;
- Adopt appropriate measures to ensure the safety of humanitarian personnel and facilitate their unconditional and unimpeded access to refugees and other persons in need of assistance, including the definition of a framework of action for humanitarian organizations;
- Provide, within the Central African early warning mechanism, for the prevention and monitoring of the humanitarian situation inherent in the crises and conflicts in the subregion.

Lastly, the participants welcomed the favourable climate that had prevailed throughout their deliberations and expressed their appreciation to the President of the Republic of Burundi, H.E. Mr. Pierre Buyoya, and to the Burundian Government and people for the warm welcome and the fraternal attentions addressed to them during their stay in Burundi.

Bujumbura, 16 August 2000

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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Resource requirements for implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report outlines the resource requirements of the Secretary-General's proposals for implementation of the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. Resources are requested on an emergency basis through the support account for the biennium 2000-2001 to enable the Secretariat to better support peacekeeping operations. In this connection, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations would be substantially reinforced and restructured, while other departments supporting peace operations would also be strengthened. In addition, resources are sought under the regular budget for the biennium 2000-2001 to provide for immediate implementation of those recommendations of the Panel that are ready for implementation as of January 2001. They include establishment of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, strengthening of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs and of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen the ability of the Office to implement tasks arising from the Panel's recommendations. The present report presents the consequential changes in resources that would be required to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 and to the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001.

* The resource requirements, by section of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, will be issued as document A/55/507/Add.1.

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The change in the regular budget for the biennium 2000-2001 would amount to $7,527,300 and includes an increase of 35 posts.

The change in the peacekeeping support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 would amount to $14,675,600 and includes an increase of 214 posts.

The proposals in the present report would result in ongoing costs in the biennium 2002-2003 of $71.4 million, of which $12 million would relate to the regular budget and $59.4 would relate to the support account. The proposed additional ongoing requirements for the biennium 2002-2003 for the regular budget are equivalent to 0.47 per cent of current regular budget appropriations and for the support account they are equivalent to 1.43 per cent of current levels of peacekeeping costs.

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I. Introduction

1. On 7 March 2000, the Secretary-General convened a high-level Panel to undertake a thorough review of the United Nations peace and security activities and to present a clear set of specific, concrete and practical recommendations to assist the United Nations in conducting such activities better in the future. On 21 August 2000, the Secretary-General transmitted the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) to the President of the General Assembly and to the President of the Security Council, requesting the support of the General Assembly and the Security Council in converting into reality the far-reaching agenda laid out in the report.

2. The Panel addressed a number of issues related to, inter alia, the need for more urgent policy development and support for realistic mandates, a capacity for information management and strategic analysis, improved mission guidance and leadership, rapid deployment standards and "on-call" expertise, and the enhancement of Headquarters capacity to plan and support peace operations. While the Panel made clear that the problems of the United Nations would not be solved by merely "throwing additional resources at them", the Panel also stressed the importance of having an effective Headquarters support capacity.

3. In its assessment of the Headquarters support capacity (not only with respect to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, but also with respect to other departments involved in peace operations), the Panel pointed to the fact that the support capacity had often been affected by the need to do what was most urgent at the expense of doing what was also important. Examples given of areas that had not received sufficient attention included: better strategic planning, not only with respect to the conduct of peace operations in the field, but also with respect to their support at Headquarters; an improved coordinated approach among all the actors involved in peace operations; more timely deployment of personnel; streamlining of procedures; availability of user-friendly guidelines; improved collection, retrieval and dissemination of information; more frequent training; and the development of managerial tools.

4. The Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the report of the Panel (A/55/502) noted that the Panel's report did not address the question of whether the United Nations should become involved in specific situations, but rather, dealt exclusively with how the United Nations could improve its performance, once a decision had been made to undertake a specific operation or activity. The Secretary-General expressed his intention to achieve greater coherence within the United Nations system as a whole in places of armed conflict, to ensure that all the efforts worked in greater harmony.

5. In order to implement some of the recommendations related to the overall conduct and management of peace operations, including those related to strategic analysis, coordination, effective mission guidance and streamlined policies and procedures, the Secretary-General has outlined his proposals for action that can be taken immediately. Some of those actions fall under regular budget funding and some, the majority, fall under the support account for peacekeeping operations. While agreeing with the Panel's view that the Secretariat could do a better job of supporting peace operations, if provided with additional resources, the Secretary-

General has stressed that any increase in resources for peace operations must not come at the expense of resources needed for development.

6. The present report outlines the resource requirements of the Secretary-General's proposals for implementation of the recommendations of the Panel, with respect to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 and the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. The supplemental increase for support account requirements covers the period from 1 January 2001 to 30 June 2001. It is noted that the budgetary implications of some of the Panel's recommendations would require further study, and that a second implementation report would be submitted to the General Assembly in the course of 2001.

7. The present report also describes a number of significant changes with respect to the reorganization of existing structures and the establishment of new entities. The consequent resource requirements for the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 and for the peacekeeping support account are presented, by section of the budget, as relevant in the addendum to the present report.

8. The present report does not address financial implications related to each individual peace operation, such as proposals for quick-impact projects, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities, rule of law and human rights elements and training and public information components within each mission. It addresses neither the recommendation for possible conversion of support account posts to the regular budget, nor other matters that are still under consideration and would be addressed in the second implementation report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in 2001 (global staffing strategy, training, information technology, web sites, etc.).

II. Organizational structures

9. The Panel has made a number of recommendations that would involve the reorganization of current structures and/or the establishment of new entities. Such recommendations would have financial implications for the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 and would include:

(a) Establishment of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat;

(b) Restructuring of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the Department of Public Information.

Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat

10. The Panel pointed out that current Secretariat staffing levels and job demands in the peace and security sector more or less preclude departmental policy planning and that the Executive Committee on Peace and Security should have, in one place, a professional system for accumulating knowledge about conflict situations, distributing that knowledge efficiently to a wide user base, generating policy analysis and formulating long-term strategies. Pursuant to the recommendation of

the Panel, the Secretary-General is proposing the establishment of an Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, within the Department of Political Affairs, as a common service to provide system-wide analysis and to assist the Executive Committee in developing policy guidance (see A/55/502, paras. 42-48).

11. For that purpose, the secretariat would have the role of coordinating the formulation of system-wide peace-building strategies. It would serve as a catalyst and focal point for the formulation, in coordination with other executive committees, of medium and long-term strategies of a cross-cutting nature that require a multidisciplinary approach. It would also serve as an in-house centre of knowledge for mission planners and desk officers and as a focal point for applying modern information systems and technology to the work of all parts of the United Nations system engaged in peace and security activities. The secretariat would comprise a Strategic Analysis Service, a Peace-building Unit (to be financed from extrabudgetary resources), and an Information Management Service.

12. The estimated resource requirements related to the establishment of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat would comprise $3,723,200 of new resources and $2,340,000 of resources redeployed from various offices/departments totalling $6,063,200. This would include the redeployment of 24 posts (from the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Public Information and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), the use of seven extrabudgetary posts, the provision of six positions as non-reimbursable loans from the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the provision of the balance of 16 new posts to be established (1 D-2, 2 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-2 and 7 GS Other level (OL)).

13. For details concerning the structure, staffing and other resource requirements of the secretariat, see document A/55/507/Add.1, section 3, Political affairs.

Restructuring

Department of Political Affairs

14. As mentioned above, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat would be established within the Department of Political Affairs. The Policy Planning Unit, currently located within the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, would be transferred to the secretariat. Additional resources are also being requested for the Electoral Assistance Division. Changes in resource requirements for the Department, excluding the secretariat, would amount to $336,300, which comprises a net amount of $50,200 for posts, resulting from the establishment of six new posts (3 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2 and 1 General Service (OL)), offset by the transfer of four posts (2 P-4 and 2 GS/Other level) to the secretariat and a provision of $286,100 for non-post requirements. Details will be provided in document A/55/507/Add.1, section 3, Political affairs.

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

15. Pursuant to recommendations of the Panel, the Secretary-General is proposing the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Secretary-General has supported the recommendation of the Panel for: the establishment of one additional post at the Assistant Secretary-General level; the strengthening and restructuring of the Military Division; the establishment of a Civilian Police Division; the establishment, through redeployment from the Department of Public Information, of a Peace and Security Public Information Unit; the establishment of a Criminal Law and Judiciary Advisory Unit to deal with the rule of law; strengthening of the Lessons Learned Unit; and the establishment of a Gender Unit.

16. Additional requirements proposed for the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for the Department are estimated at $675,900, comprising $603,900 for the establishment of eight new posts (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 3 P-4/3 and 4 GS) and $72,000 for non-post requirements.

17. Emergency supplemental requirements with respect to the support account for peacekeeping operations would amount to $11,365,400, comprising $5,006,900 for the establishment of 181 new posts (2 D-2, 1 D-1, 8 P-5, 104 P-4/3, 8 P-2/1, 8 GS (Principal level (PL) and 50 GS (OL)) and $6,358,500 for non-post requirements.

18. Details will be set out in document A/55/507/Add.1, section 5, Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Department of Public Information

19. It is proposed that the Cartographic Unit and the Media Monitoring and Analysis Unit be transferred to the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat and the Peace and Security Section of the Public Affairs Division to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Changes in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for the Department of Public Information amount to a reduction of $1,830,800, comprising $1,911,300 for the redeployment of 21 posts (3 P-5, 8 P-4/3, 2 P-2/1, 8 GS (OL)) and a net increase of $80,500 for non-post requirements. For details, see document A/55/507/Add.1, section 26, Department of Public Information.

III. Related matters

Fact-finding missions

20. The Secretary-General has welcomed the recommendation of the Panel calling for more frequent fact-finding missions to areas of tension. The resource requirements related to such missions are included under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Should additional requirements become necessary, the Secretary-General would continue to utilize the authority granted to him by the General Assembly under its resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

Integrated Mission Task Forces

21. The Panel drew attention to the absence of personnel from various entities dedicated to the planning and support of operations. The Panel recognized that, although collaboration existed, there was no single working-level focal point at Headquarters that could address all of the concerns, especially at the level of the heads of mission, of an operation in the field. The Panel was of the view that there should be one entity at Headquarters that could provide immediate answers and guidance for the overall management and conduct of an operation.

22. The concept is derived from the notion of "matrix management" used by organizations for the assignment of necessary talent to specific projects without reorganizing themselves every time a project arises. Such an entity would be an integrated mission task force, which would meet to plan operations and continue to work together for a period of up to six months to ensure full deployment of a mission. It would serve as the first level of contact for the peace operations for all aspects of their work. Members of the task force would be seconded temporarily from those departments/offices involved in the peace operation and would deal with time-critical, resource-intensive requirements to support mission planning, start-up and initial sustainment.

23. Given the temporary nature of the integrated mission task forces, and depending on the complexity of the peace operation concerned, it is not expected that additional resources would be required at all times. However, under special circumstances when it would appear that the effective functioning of a task force would require supplementary resources, the Secretary-General would resort to the authority granted to him by the General Assembly in its resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.

Information technology

24. The Secretary-General has stressed the importance of a comprehensive system-wide inventory of the information systems and information and communications technology resources related to peace operations, including geographical information. A working group comprised of information technology experts throughout the system has begun surveying overall information technology needs. A more detailed proposal will be presented in the Secretary-General's second implementation report but, in the meantime, resource requirements are proposed in order to get the project started.

IV. Changes in the level of resources and staffing

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

25. The additional resource requirements for the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 would total $22,202,900, of which $7,527,300 relates to the regular budget and the balance of $14,675,600 to the support account. The details by budget section would be as follows (in thousands of United States dollars):

Regular budget (2000-2001)

		2000-2001 initial appropriations	*Resource growth*	*2000-2001 proposed revised estimates*
Section 3	Political affairs	137 756.0	6 399.5	144 155.5
Section 4	Disarmament	14 067.9	(103.7)	13 964.2
Section 5	Peacekeeping operations	76 094.7	675.9	76 770.6
Section 9	Economic and social affairs	113 112.6	(143.2)	112 969.4
Section 22	Human rights	41 163.4	1 589.4	42 752.8
Section 25	Humanitarian affairs	18 841.8	(124.4)	18 717.4
Section 26	Public information	143 605.5	(1 830.8)	141 774.7
Section 27	Management and common support services	441 857.4	696.5	442 553.9
Section 32	Staff assessment	314 248.0	368.1	314 616.1
	Total	**1 300 747.3**	**7 527.3**	**1 308 274.6**
Support account (1 July 2000-30 June 2001)				
Section 5	Peacekeeping operations	35 616.6	11 365.4	46 982.0
Section 8	Legal affairs	719.8	57.7	777.5
Section 22	Human rights	-	98.3	98.3
Section 27	Management and common support services	11 838.6	3 154.2	14 992.8
	Total	**48 175.0**	**14 675.6**	**62 850.6**

26. The present report includes proposals for an additional 249 posts, 35 of which relate to the regular budget and 214 to the support account. The details by budget section would be as follows:

Regular budget (2000-2001)

		2000-2001 approved staffing	*Proposed changes*	*2000-2001 proposed revised staff*
Section 3	Political affairs	243	44	287
Section 4	Disarmament	48	(1)	47
Section 5	Peacekeeping operations	354	8	362
Section 9	Economic and social affairs	517	(1)	516
Section 22	Human rights	148	7	155
Section 25	Humanitarian affairs	54	(1)	53
Section 26	Public information	735	(21)	714
	Total	**2 099**	**35**	**2 134**

		2000-2001 approved staffing	Proposed changes	2000-2001 proposed revised staff
Support account (1 July 2000-30 June 2001)				
Section 5	Peacekeeping operations	349	181	530
Section 8	Legal affairs	5	1	6
Section 22	Human rights	-	3	3
Section 27	Management and common support services	97	29	126
	Total	**451**	**214**	**665**

27. The redeployment of 24 regular budget posts to the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat is proposed, as follows:

From	*Posts*
Department of Political Affairs	2 P-4, 2 GS
Department for Disarmament Affairs	1 P-3
Department of Peacekeeping Operations	1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-2
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	1 P-5
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	1 P-4
Department of Public Information	2 P-5, 4 P-3, 2 P-2 and 6 GS

28. The redeployment of seven posts (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 3 P-3 and 2 GS) from the Department of Public Information to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is also proposed.

V. Presentation and methodology

29. The detailed resource requirements set out in the addendum to the present report will be presented by relevant sections of the budget, as follows:

Regular budget

(a) The 2000-2001 appropriation approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/250 of 23 December 1999;

(b) Resources requested cover the period from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001;

(c) New posts proposed for the second year of the biennium 2000-2001 reflect a delayed recruitment factor of 50 per cent;

(d) Reclassifications and redeployment assumes a vacancy factor of 6.5 per cent in respect of posts in the Professional category and above and 2.5 per cent for posts in the General Service and related categories.

Support account

(a) Approved budget for the period 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001;

(b) Resources requested cover the period from 1 January 2001 to 30 June 2001, ending in the financial period of the support account;

(c) New posts proposed for the period from 1 January 2001 to 30 June 2001 reflect a delayed recruitment of 50 per cent for the six-month period, that is, 75 per cent of the cost of posts for 2001;

(d) Reclassifications and redeployment assume a vacancy factor of 6.5 per cent in respect of posts in the Professional category and above and 2.5 per cent for posts in the General Service and related categories, applied to six months of the cost for posts for 2001.

30. Support account financing has been sought solely in connection with the emergency request to strengthen the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and other departments' activities to better support existing peacekeeping operations. Regular budget financing has been sought for the other initiatives proposed by the Panel, including the establishment of a new Assistant Secretary-General Post in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the establishment of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, the strengthening of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and for the related common services requirements provided by the Department of Management.

VI. Requirements for the biennium 2002-2003

31. The requirements proposed for 2001 are estimated on the basis of utilizing the standard vacancy turnover factors for new posts. Costs in the biennium 2002-2003, however, are to be estimated on the basis of the vacancy rates utilized for established posts (6.5 per cent for Professional posts and 2.5 per cent for General Service posts). On this basis, the cost of the proposals in the present report would amount to $71,454,800 for the 2002-2003 period at 2000-2001 rates. The regular budget component would amount to $12,020,500, while that for the support account for the same period would be equivalent to $59,434,000. It may be noted that the proposed additional requirements for the regular budget amount to 0.47 per cent of the current regular budget appropriation. In the case of the support account, the increase amounts to 1.43 per cent of the current levels of peacekeeping costs ($4,145 million on a two-year basis).

VII. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

32. Should the General Assembly approve the implementation proposals set out in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/502) and the resource requirements detailed in this report, the action to be taken by the Assembly is the following:

(a) To appropriate for the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 the additional amount of $7,527,300, to be distributed among the sections of the budget, as reflected in paragraph 25 above;

(b) To finance an amount of $14,675,600 under the support account under the budgets of the peacekeeping operations, to be considered at its current session.

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The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 20 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a letter addressed to you by the Foreign Minister of Israel, Shlomo Ben Ami, in which he presents an update on the events which have taken place since the Sharm Al-Sheikh Summit (see annex).

I should also like to thank you for your efforts in recent days to bring about an end to the bloodshed and facilitate the return of calm and security to our region.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 40, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative

00-70189 (E) 201000

Annex to the letter dated 20 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

20 October 2000

I am writing to you upon the conclusion of the Sharm Al-Sheikh Summit. I would like to bring you up to date regarding Israel's compliance with the understandings reached at the Summit as well as with our assessment of the current situation on the ground.

As you may know, at the Sharm Al-Sheikh Summit both Israel and the Palestinian Authority agreed upon the implementation of several points, as stated by President Clinton:

First, both sides have agreed to issue public statements that unequivocally call for a complete end to all violence. While Israel immediately issued such a statement, it took the Palestinian Authority over 24 hours to reciprocate. During that time Palestinian gunmen continued provoking Israel's security forces throughout the territories and in Jerusalem. One police officer was critically injured in Jerusalem just a few hours after the Summit ended. Yesterday, there was yet another vicious attack: a group of civilians, including women and children, was attacked by Tanzim forces while touring Mount Eival near the Palestinian-controlled city of Nablus. One civilian, a father of eight, was killed as a result of this attack and four others were injured. Meanwhile, the Palestinian media is still manifesting hatred and incitement contrary to the Sharm Al-Sheikh understandings. Shootings and armed confrontations are still being initiated by the Palestinians even as I write these words to you.

I would like to stress the key role played in the last events by the Tanzim paramilitary armed group, sponsored by the Fatah organization. Israel has repeatedly warned that this armed militia, consisting of thousands of armed members, is instigating serious incidents and riots in the territories. Needless to say, such behaviour runs contrary to all agreements signed with the Palestinian Authority. Undoubtedly, this outbreak of violence in the territories in the past weeks, culminating in the last two days' violation of the recent Sharm Al-Sheikh understandings, was carried out by the Tanzim in full cooperation with the Palestinian Authority.

One does not need better evidence than the actual words of Marwan Barghouty, head of the Tanzim group, on Israel Television the very day after the Summit ended: "*I think that the Fatah movement is carrying out its role in leading this intifada and will continue to do so ... I think that this conflict will continue, maybe even escalate, and will take other forms and shapes in the future ...*".

Second, both sides have agreed that the United States will develop, in consultation with the United Nations, a "Fact-finding Committee" that will examine the events of recent weeks. A final report is to be submitted to President Clinton and will later be published. Israel welcomes any efforts made by the United States and the international community to end the violence of the last few weeks, and will fully cooperate with the committee.

Third, both sides have agreed to take immediate concrete measures to eliminate points of friction, redeploy forces, maintain calm, end incitement and

restore law and order. As agreed, Israel has taken the following steps in full compliance with the understandings reached at Sharm Al-Sheikh: Israel Defence Forces troops and armoured vehicles were redeployed, the Gaza airport was reopened and the closure within the territories was removed. More measures, that are meant to ease the situation on the ground, were taken as well.

Finally, in his concluding remarks, President Clinton mentioned the need to address the underlying roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Naturally, the issue of the prospects for resuming negotiations for a permanent status agreement came up. Both sides have agreed to examine those prospects in two weeks' time.

Israel's commitment to peace is no secret and needs no proof. At Camp David Israel displayed unprecedented openness and flexibility. It is essential for the international community to understand that the degree and intensity of the recent violence and terror have not been witnessed before. Israel is determined to put a complete end to all violence before talks can be resumed.

Ultimately, the test is on the ground. The next hours and days are critical not only to the future of the negotiations but mostly to the prospects of stability and peaceful coexistence in the region. I do hope that the Palestinians understand this as well.

May I, therefore, call upon you to add your voice in condemnation of all violence and exert your influence on the Palestinian Authority leadership to fully comply with what was agreed upon. We have to stand firm against all violations of the Sharm Al-Sheikh understandings and work together in order to stabilize the situation, thus enabling us to maintain hope for future progress.

(*Signed*) Shlomo **Ben Ami**
Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 114 (c)
Human rights questions: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Situation of human rights in Myanmar

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 18 of General Assembly resolution 54/186 of 17 December 1999 on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, in which the Assembly requested me to continue my discussions with the Government of Myanmar on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy in Myanmar, to submit additional reports to the Assembly during its fifty-fourth session on the progress of those discussions and to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session.

2. As I have indicated in previous reports, I consider the role entrusted to me by the General Assembly as being one of good offices, as opposed to the fact-finding mandate assigned to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights.

3. In implementation of resolution 54/186, in April 2000, I appointed Razali Ismail, former Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations, as my new Special Envoy, replacing Alvaro de Soto. Mr. Razali visited Myanmar from 29 June to 3 July 2000 to "build confidence" with his interlocutors. During his visit, Mr. Razali held consultations with Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council, U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Brigadier-General David Abel, Minister in the office of the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council. He also held consultations with leaders of two political parties, namely, the National League for Democracy (NLD), including its General-Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy.

* The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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4. Mr. Razali undertook his second mission to Myanmar from 9 to 12 October 2000. During his second visit, Mr. Razali held consultations with senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 of the Council, U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Major General Ket Sein, Minister of Health, and Colonel Tin Hlaing, Minister of Home Affairs. He also held two rounds of discussions with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her residence and had a meeting with U Aung Khan Htyi, leader of the Pao ethnic group, during his trip to the Shan State.

5. Mr. Razali's second mission took place during what I look on as a setback in the atmosphere surrounding the efforts for national reconciliation. On 24 August, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and a dozen other NLD leaders were stopped near Dala, a small town on the outskirts of Yangon, when they attempted to travel to the south to carry out NLD business. After a nine-day standoff, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders were brought back to the capital and confined to their homes by the authorities on 2 September. Concerned about their well-being, I issued two statements and, taking advantage of his presence in New York during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, met with U Win Aung, on 12 September. During the meeting, I requested that the authorities immediately remove restrictions on the movement and access to the diplomatic corps imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders. I was pleased to note that the restrictions were lifted on 14 September, shortly after my meeting with the Minister.

6. However, a week later, on 21 September, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders attempted to travel again, this time to Mandalay. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was brought back from the Yangon train station and again confined to her home by the authorities. The whereabouts of the other NLD members who were taken away from the train station was not known. I regret to note that the restrictions on the movement and access to the diplomatic corps imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders have still not lifted.

II. Contents of the discussions

7. My Special Envoy and I have raised, separately, with the Myanmar authorities the concerns of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights with the Myanmar authorities and other political figures, as reflected in their resolutions adopted over the years on the restoration of democracy and human rights in Myanmar, a dialogue involving the Government, political parties — particularly the NLD — and ethnic groups, freedom for political parties to conduct normal political activities, the release of political prisoners, the visit of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, continued access to prisoners by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and, last, but by no means least, on forced labour practices.

8. In our separate discussions with the authorities, my Special Envoy and I pointed out that the recent events in Yangon underscored the need for national reconciliation in Myanmar. During his second mission, my Special Envoy therefore focused his efforts on finding a way to initiate the process of dialogue that would lead to national reconciliation. The Special Envoy reasoned that Myanmar should benefit from being a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and that now was the time for the two sides to begin talks. He called on

senior General Than Shwe, Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt and other government leaders to consider taking the initiative in opening dialogues with opposition leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. At the same time, the Special Envoy also urged Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to engage in a dialogue with the authorities and to respond in good faith if they took positive steps towards national reconciliation.

9. The authorities repeated that their Government was a transitional government, compelled to take the reigns of power in 1988 to prevent the country from disintegrating, and that they would be ready to hand over power once unity, stability and a degree of economic development took hold. Noting that NLD showed no sign of sincerity and mutual respect, the authorities said that one way of demonstrating sincerity was by showing a desire to "work constructively" instead of attacking everything the Government did. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, for her part, expressed her continued readiness to engage in a dialogue with the Government at any time. My Special Envoy met with a representative of one ethnic group who expressed a desire to see a political dialogue take place between NLD and the military authorities. In my Special Envoy's view, the first step in the resumption of a political dialogue towards national reconciliation should be to ease the sense of mutual distrust between the military leadership and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He pointed out that, while the United Nations was willing to assist their efforts, national reconciliation was an issue that they themselves had to manage.

10. My Special Envoy stressed the need for the authorities to deal seriously with the requirements of the International Labour Organization (ILO) regarding the practice of forced labour. The authorities assured him that the Government had done its best to comply with the requirements of ILO on that subject and that it was prepared to discuss specific measures with the ILO technical mission during its visit to Yangon from 20 October. He also conveyed to the authorities the widespread concern of the international community over the situation in Myanmar, especially the imprisonment of people who are perceived from the outside as being no more than political activists. Such actions, in his view, could not but impact negatively on the Government's goal of returning the country to democracy. While appreciating the release of three elderly people from prison during the summer, my Special Envoy also requested that the authorities do more. The Government indicated to my Special Envoy that it would review more cases of prisoners for possible release, while assuring him of its continued cooperation with ICRC concerning visits to prisons and other places of detention, according to its standard procedures. I was pleased to note that, as a result of the Special Envoy's efforts, another five elderly people were released from prison on 17 October.

11. In his meetings with the authorities and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, my Special Envoy also discussed the possibility of a greater United Nations humanitarian assistance, especially in the health sector to deal with the ever-increasing issues of HIV/AIDS, malaria and lack of immunization. The Government mentioned maternal and child welfare as an area in which international assistance is also required.

12. The issue of the visit of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights was raised, but there was no response from the authorities as to when such a visit could take place.

III. Observations

13. I welcome the fact that my Special Envoy was able to hold a discussion with the senior General Than Shwe and to meet twice with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during his second mission to Myanmar. I also welcome the announcement by the authorities that universities and colleges in Myanmar have been reopened for the first time in three years. While I am unable to report concrete progress on other issues that the international community has raised time and again in successive General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights resolutions, it is my strong hope that the discussions that my Special Envoy had with the top leadership of Myanmar and with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will give rise to a new momentum for a resumption of the process of dialogue between the two sides in the coming months. I stand ready to continue to do my utmost to assist the process of national reconciliation in Myanmar, in particular with the assistance of countries in the region.

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Training and research

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 54/229 of 22 December 1999 on the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Principal issues addressed in the resolution were the strengthening of inter-institutional cooperation, the systematic utilization of UNITAR by United Nations funds and programmes, the need for continuity in the management of UNITAR and the facilities to be granted for the maintenance of UNITAR's offices.

II. Improving institutional cooperation and partnerships

2. As detailed in the report of activities covering the period 1 July 1998-30 June 2000 submitted by the Executive Director of UNITAR,[1] the programmes have remained steady and sustained. Some 120 different programmes, seminars and workshops have been organized throughout the world each year since 1996. More than 5,500 participants are now benefiting from UNITAR's training and capacity-building activities annually.

3. The policy of focusing project delivery on a limited number of well-identified "niches" in which UNITAR enjoys expertise and sound track records, introduced as part of the restructuring process, has been continued. In response to the second parameter of the policy, development and strengthening of institutional cooperation within and outside the United Nations system, UNITAR has established cooperational links with most programmes and funds of the Organization and agencies of the United Nations system.

4. The network of partnership with national and regional academic and specialized centres has been expanded, particularly in Africa. The recruitment of experts and resource persons from developing countries and countries with economies in transition has also been growing, facilitating increasing exchange of expertise and experience at regional and interregional levels.

5. Research on the design and development of new pedagogic methodologies has continued. This includes new technologies for country-driven need assessments and preparation and diffusion of tailor-made training materials. A collective effort by all programme coordinators at UNITAR is being made, in cooperation with other entities of the United Nations, to develop progressively distance learning, including e-training.

6. The General Assembly, in paragraph 9 of resolution 54/229, encouraged the Board of Trustees to

* The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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consider organizing events of the Institute at additional sites, including the cities hosting regional commissions, in order to promote greater participation and to reduce costs. Unfortunately, lack of sufficient non-earmarked contributions from Member States to the General Fund of UNITAR did not allow the launch of programmes having costs covered by the General Fund.

III. Systematic utilization of UNITAR

7. The General Assembly, in resolution 54/229, paragraph 10, requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Institute and with United Nations funds and programmes, to continue to explore ways and means systematically to utilize the Institute in the execution of training and capacity-building programmes. Significant progress has been made in this respect. UNITAR is conducting a major training and capacity-building programme funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Possibilities for developing and enlarging such undertakings are encouraging. Moreover, since last year UNITAR has been conducting programmes funded by the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations Foundation for International Partnerships, either directly or through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) or UNDP.

8. The Secretary-General will continue to encourage funds and programmes of the Organization to make the best possible use of UNITAR's competence in the field of training and capacity-building. The potentialities are many and increasing for the design of joint activities in the field, in Geneva and in New York.

9. The financial situation of UNITAR has improved but remains fragile. The funding of Special Purpose Grants is satisfactory. It is worth noting that several industrialized countries that had discontinued their support to UNITAR are resuming their grants to Special Purpose Projects.

10. However, the voluntary contributions to the General Fund remain insufficient. With the restoration of UNITAR's credibility and the relevance and usefulness of its programmes being generally recognized, the Secretary-General expects that developed countries, in particular, will resume their contributions.

IV. Continuity in the management of UNITAR

11. At its thirty-eighth session, held in Geneva from 26 to 28 April 2000, UNITAR's Board of Trustees reiterated its concern that the level of the Executive Director's post, commensurate with his responsibilities, should be upgraded. This matter is under review by the Secretary-General.

12. In the meantime, in response to the call in General Assembly resolution 54/229 for continuity in the management of the Institute, the Secretary-General has extended the appointment of the Executive Director beyond the age of retirement.

V. Provision of additional facilities to the Institute

13. The Secretary-General has taken note of the General Assembly's renewed call to him to continue to explore all possible ways and means to provide additional facilities to the Institute for maintaining its offices (Assembly resolution 54/229, para. 12).

14. In the light of that request and mindful of the conclusions and recommendations reached by the UNITAR Board of Trustees at its thirty-eighth session, the Secretary-General has continued to review the matter. The Secretary-General has determined that no additional considerations have emerged to warrant a deviation from established policy and practice, as detailed in his note on the rental of United Nations premises by press and other entities (A/C.5/54/25). The Secretary-General is of the opinion that he is bound by the established practice, which is based on the fundamental principle of not burdening the regular budget with expenditures incurred by extrabudgetary programmes. Given the conflicting nature of General Assembly mandates, the matter is at an impasse and the Secretary-General would require authorization from the Assembly to waive rental and maintenance costs for the premises occupied by UNITAR in Geneva and New York.

15. In the event that the General Assembly wishes to proceed in this manner, the Secretariat stands ready to provide information regarding the charges incurred so far that have remained outstanding and the estimated expenses that will be incurred on a yearly basis.

Notes

[1] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 14 (A/55/14).